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ANTI-SLAVERY MONTHLY REPORTER.

No. 50.]

FOR JULY, 1829.

[No. 2. Vol. iii.

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I.—SIR ROBERT FARQUHAR'S ATTACK.

THE last Reporter will have prepared our readers to expect the reply of Sir Robert Farquhar to the statements made in our former numbers, Nos. 42 and 44, on the subject of slavery in the Mauritius. Sir Robert indeed professes to confine his reply to the former, but it does, in point of fact, embrace both. Of this reply we wish to speak with all due forbearance and respect; and yet it would be vain for us to attempt to conceal that we have read it without the slightest alarm for the integrity of the statements which it affects to expose. We must first throw entirely aside the Baronet's angry vituperations against the Reporter, such as "wanton attack of wicked and designing persons;" "a tissue of atrocious calumnies;" "the illiberality and falsehood of the narrow-minded, grovelling, and paltry charlatans of the present day," their "incautious enthusiasm;" their "dangerous spirit and blind fanaticism;" their "venom;" their "wild" and "visionary experiments;" their "gratuitous, wicked, barefaced falsehoods"—"basest falsehoods" of men who, "like inquisitors, work in the dark, and stab men's reputations behind their back," and that, "from motives of private pique and personal interest or malice;" of men pursuing a "system of perjury and subornation of perjury," "debauching soldiers for purposes the most wicked and diabolical," and whose conduct is "without a parallel since the infamous days of the star chamber."

These hard words are gleaned from less than five pages of letter-press, two-thirds of which consist moreover of mere unsupported assertions, remarks laudatory of his own administration, vague speculations on colonial policy, and random denunciations of the designs of the abolitionists as tending to ruin the colonies and to enrich themselves.

To no part of these fruitful topics, whether laudatory of himself or accusatory of us, is it necessary to say one syllable in reply. Valeat quantum! We will confine our observations strictly and exclusively to what is precise and tangible in his affirmations.

We had asserted in the Reporter, No. 42, p. 337, that, during Sir Robert Farquhar's administration, we could not discover that either

any "series of measures," or even "any one measure," had been adopted by him "for the defence and protection of the slaves," "for restraining the oppressions of the master, or protecting the persons, or improving the condition of the slaves." This assertion Sir Robert describes as "a gratuitous, wicked, and barefaced falsehood."—Now we think the Honourable Baronet is hardly justified in the use of such strong language.—In consequence of an address voted by the House of Commons on the 24th of November, 1826, there were made to that House, on the 10th of July, 1828, the following returns, viz. 1. "A return of the laws, with copies or extracts thereof, in force at the Mauritius, *regulating the punishment of slaves by their masters*, and which have been registered in the courts." 2. "A return of orders made from time to time by the several authorities at the Mauritius, *regulating the punishment of slaves by their masters*."

These returns are perfectly silent as to any measures, nay, as to any single regulation, adopted, during Sir R. Farquhar's administration, "for restraining the oppressions of the masters, or protecting the persons or improving the condition of the slaves." Surely, then, we have, in these returns, at least good *prima facie* evidence of the truth of our averment. Still Sir Robert speaks of "*my numerous measures*" upon this subject, and affirms that he can "cite numberless regulations made for the benefit, ease, and comfort of the slaves since the conquest;" and he refers, in proof, to a certain report made to him by the Attorney General of the colony, in 1814, in compliance with certain orders he had issued to that officer. He produces, however, neither his own orders nor the Attorney General's report; nor does he tell us where either the one or the other may be found. But while he declines to particularize all *his numerous measures* of amelioration, he condescends to specify a few, and these we presume the most important and prominent of the whole. From among "the proclamations and orders issued by himself and the British Government, for ameliorating the condition of the slaves since the conquest," he selects four, on which to rest his vindication. These we shall consider separately:

1. "Modifications, in the year 1814, for facilitating the liberation of slaves." We have already referred to these modifications, (No. 42, p. 335.) We there speak of them as forming the single edict of Governor Farquhar, which appeared to modify in any way the slave law of the Mauritius, and thus describe it: "Besides requiring many onerous formalities, and renewing the old law that no slave shall be manumitted without the permission of the Governor, who alone is to decide whether the proposed manumission may be carried into effect without injury to the community;" this edict "actually imposes a fine of 150 to 300 dollars on each act of manumission. By this edict the Governor further empowers *himself* to employ on the highways all freed persons having no visible means of support."

It seems a misnomer, therefore, to designate this particular act as calculated to "*ameliorate* the condition of the slaves." Its proper designation is an act *to deteriorate* their condition. And so thought and still thinks His Majesty's Government. Not only is it opposed to the spirit of all Lord Bathurst's instructions on the subject of slave

reform, and to the spirit of all Sir George Murray's practical measures with respect to the freed; but its whole tenor is expressly condemned and reprobated by Mr. Huskisson, in his despatch of the 10th of October, 1827. "I do not perceive in it," he says, "any provision which tendst o facilitate manumission. The tendency of every part of it, on the contrary, is to create obstacles which render it almost nugatory as a meliorating measure." These words indeed apply more immediately to Sir Lowry Cole's amended edition of Sir Robert Farquhar's law on the subject; but they apply with infinitely greater force and appositeness to the latter. Sir R.'s proclamation never received, says Mr. Huskisson, His Majesty's sanction; and he directs that it should be made "known to the public, in the most authentic manner, that his Majesty is pleased to disallow" both it and the proclamation of Sir Lowry Cole. Indeed it is only necessary to read the boasted act, to be convinced of its tyrannous and oppressive nature, (see Papers by command, of 1828, p. 277.

Sir R. Farquhar seems to rely chiefly on this edict of his, respecting manumission, as proving the falsehood of our assertions as to the absence of all measures for improving the condition of the slave. He clings to it with fondness, and returns to it again and again. It is certainly, however, rather unfortunate that this very measure must be viewed, in the judgment of every man in this country capable of discerning right from wrong, no less than in that of His Majesty's Government, as in reality an act for *deteriorating* and not for *ameliorating* the condition of the slaves.

2. "In March, 1811," says Sir Robert, "the public orders issued by me at Mauritius, and republished at Bourbon in April of the same year, diminished the weight of chains one half in all cases of simple police when applied to men, and altogether abolished them when applied to women and children." It is further true, that in a letter of Sir Robert Farquhar, dated February 15, 1811, he stated that he had "judged it proper to order that when slaves are to be chained for security or punishment, these chains shall not be heavier than are indispensably necessary to secure the person of the slave; and in the event of proprietors transgressing this order, the slaves are to become forfeited to the use of government."—Now after this official statement of the 15th of February, 1811, addressed to the Earl of Liverpool, and the extract which precedes it from the Baronet's letter of the 3rd of February, 1829, we shall perhaps be thought hazarding too much when we say that we believe Sir R. Farquhar to be mistaken in supposing such an order to have been actually issued by him. That on the 15th of February, 1811, when he affirms he had already issued his order respecting chains, he had not actually issued but only contemplated issuing it, we may infer from his saying in his last letter that it was issued not in February but in March. But, putting this perhaps accidental discrepancy out of view, the probability, on the whole, still seems to us to be, that no such order, having the force of law, was ever issued. Our reasons for this opinion we will now shortly state.

In the first place no such order has been produced. It has been called for, but has not been returned.

In the second place, when, on the 13th December, 1826, Sir Lowry

trusts, "will at length open the eyes of the public to the delusion attempted to be practised upon them, by persons whose statements he has shown to be utterly unworthy of credit, and whose incessant labours militate against the best interests of the country." We can only hope with Mr. Brougham, that when the promised inquiry takes place, he will be furnished with better witnesses and better compurgators than the attempted vindication of his conduct, contained in the letter now before us, will be found to supply.

II.—WEST INDIAN REPORTER.

THE West-Indian Reporter has so long been silent, that we concluded it had ceased to exist, when towards the close of the last month it burst upon us with five successive numbers in one day, *viz.* Nos. 16 to 20. The two first bear the date of April, the others have no date assigned to them. We propose adverting briefly to a few of the topics of which they treat; for by far the largest proportion of their contents is a dull uninteresting mass, composed of West-Indian documents, of no value whatever; of the eternal mouthing of such Jamaica speechifiers as Messrs. Berry and Barrett and Mitchel; of a tiresome history of the double duty question, for which, out of Jamaica, notwithstanding all the noise it makes there, no one here cares one farthing; and of the worthless evidence of anonymous writers, or of such a discredited partizan as Alexander Barclay, varied by stupid extracts from the colonial journals, and enlivened only by foul abuse of the Missionaries and of the Anti-Slavery Reporter; the whole more resembling a spent bullet, hot, heavy, and dusky, than any thing we remember lately to have seen in the way of authorship.

1.—Sectaries of Jamaica.

No. XVI. contains eight very closely printed pages relating to the *Sectarians*, in which the proceedings of the Jamaica Assembly respecting them are partially detailed. The evidence procured by a Select Committee of that body was avowedly taken, so says the West-India Reporter, in order "to be laid before the King in Council and his Majesty's Ministers, and to be distributed and circulated generally in this country;" and he draws, as we shall see, from this fact, the most triumphant proof of the integrity of the Jamaica Assembly, and the irresistible force of the testimony by which its committee has reported that they had established, beyond all possibility of question, the following charges.

First, "That the *principal* object of the Sectarians in Jamaica is to *extort money* from their congregations *by every possible pretext*; to obtain which, recourse has been had to the *most indecent* expedients.

Second, "That in order to further this object, and to gain an ascendancy over the negro mind, they inculcate the doctrines of equality and the rights of man; they preach and teach sedition even from the pulpit, and by misrepresentations and falsehood endeavour to cast odium upon all the public authorities of the island, not even excepting the representative of Majesty itself.

Third, "That the consequences have been abject poverty, loss of comfort, and discontent, among the slaves frequenting their chapels, and deterioration of property to their masters.

the weight of the chains they had imposed was not excessive. We cannot, therefore, believe that there could have been any law of Sir R. Farquhar's with which such a sentence would have been compatible; or that, if there were any law of his with which it was incompatible, he himself, being on the spot at the time, would have calmly permitted it to be so grossly and flagrantly violated without one word of remonstrance, or a single note of dissatisfaction.

We may, therefore, fairly put aside this alleged law of 1811, as well as that of 1814, as securing any amelioration of the condition of the slaves.

3. "In the year 1817," Sir Robert further affirms, "the public whipping of women was totally prohibited by my orders, as well as the public working in chains of female maroons." Now we will tell Sir Robert, that if the whipping of women is permitted at all, it were better to be public than private. But, be that as it may, this order of Sir Robert, (whatever may have been its terms and its tenor, for it has not been produced, and we have only his account of it,) could evidently have had nothing to do with the relation of master and slave, but must have been confined to *police* inflictions, and to the chain or convict gang which was placed under the police officers. It is not fair, therefore, to cite as an order for "ameliorating the condition of the slaves," one which must have been intended, not for the regulation or control of *masters*, but for the regulation of his own police.

That we have given a probable account of this matter will still more clearly appear by referring to a letter of Sir Lowry Cole, of the 15th December, 1826, addressed as a circular to the Commandants and Civil Commissaries of Districts, (paper of 1828, No. 526, p. 32,) in which he says, "I also think it necessary to dwell on the various punishments inflicted on negro women. *Up to this moment, there has not existed any difference in the corrections ordered, by the masters, in respect to THEM, and those in use in regard to the men. Rest assured, gentlemen, that his Majesty's Government will suppress the punishment of flogging for negro women,*" &c. &c.—If it had been true that Sir R. Farquhar had passed any law on this subject, in 1817, how could Sir Lowry Cole have used such language as this in 1826?—Again, therefore, we say, if we have misrepresented the matter, it will not be enough for Sir Robert to brand what we have said with the terms, "gratuitous, wicked, barefaced falsehood:" such terms will not avail him. He must produce those orders of 1811 and of 1817, a bare reference to which he now would make his shield of defence, and then let the public judge between us.

4. The only remaining measure which Sir Robert specifies is one, he says, which "*I made on the 25th January, 1813, by which the barbarous practice of paying to the owner the price of a maroon, in the event of his being killed in pursuit, when flying from the officers, or resisting them, was totally abolished; and, by the same law, the reward to the officer seizing the maroon, was greatly augmented when the maroon was taken alive.*" Again, we say, if there be such a law, why is it not produced? But, even if there be such a law, and it shall be found to bear out all that Sir R. Farquhar predicates of it, it is still a law which

Cole issued an Act for fixing "the weight of the chains and fetters, or iron rings, which the inhabitants are authorized by the existing laws to put upon their slaves," (see paper of 10th July, 1828, No. 526, p. 27), he introduces it by the following preamble: "Whereas the laws of the colony, particularly the 37th article of the letters patent of the month of December, 1723, in *permitting to the inhabitants to put their slaves in chains whenever they shall think these latter shall have merited it, have determined nothing with respect to the weight of the chains and fetters;*" and then he proceeds (as is stated in the Reporter, No. 42, p. 335,) to define the weight of chains and fetters which may thenceforward lawfully be put, not only on men, but on women and children also.—But how could Sir Lowry Cole affirm that no previous law of the colony had determined any thing as to the weight of chains and fetters, if Sir R. Farquhar's order of 1811 had previously had any legal existence? Had such an order existed, it must of necessity have been known to Mr. Blane, the Secretary of the Government, who, along with Sir Lowry Cole, signed the law of December, 1826, and who had filled the office of Chief Commissary of Police, under Sir R. Farquhar, at so early a period as 1813, (see papers of 1828, No. 295, p. 28). Mr. Blane, we think, could not have been ignorant of such a law, if it had been enacted in 1811; at least, if he, the Chief Commissary of Police, knew nothing of it, it might as well not have been enacted: it must have been a dead letter from the first. The very signature of Mr. Blane to such a preamble as we have cited seems decisive of the question.

It is no less extraordinary, if the alleged order by which Sir Robert says he abolished, in 1811, chains altogether as respected women and children, ever had a legal and efficient existence, that, in 1826, Sir Lowry Cole and Sir Robert's own Commissary of Police, Mr. Blane, should be jointly occupied, under pretence of lightening the chains of the slave women and children, in framing a law, which actually went to reimpose those chains, after they had been previously altogether struck off by Sir Robert Farquhar in 1811.

But we have a third and still stronger reason for doubting the correctness of Sir Robert Farquhar's memory with respect to the promulgation of this alleged law of 1811. We mean the conduct of Sir Robert himself, and of the Magistrates acting under his immediate observation and control in the town of Port Louis, in the month of October, 1821. Two cases were in that month tried in the public courts, which involved this very question of the weight of chains; the cases of Virginia and Azor. They are both detailed in the Reporter, No. 44, p. 382, and p. 383; and, though a communication was addressed to Sir Robert himself on the occasion, yet no reference appears to have been made to this law which, had it existed, must have ensured the conviction and punishment of the parties accused; one of whom had imposed, on a male slave, chains of 30lbs. weight, six times heavier than the heaviest allowed by Sir Lowry Cole's subsequent act; and another had imposed, on a slave girl, irons weighing 76lbs., besides "*martyring*" her flesh with the rattan.—Now, in these two cases, the judges decided that what the accused persons had done was allowed by law, and that

stated to have suffered, on account of any variety of complexion she may have received from nature.

Had we known the fact which Sir Robert communicates, of his having cashiered a magistrate for his culpable want of promptitude in arresting Madame Nayle, we should certainly have mentioned it, as a fact highly creditable to him; but also as a fact illustrative of the enormity of the transaction which led to this act of just retribution.

We purposely omit to combat the unsatisfactory defence of Sir Robert Farquhar with respect to the slave population returns, as it would not be quite decorous to anticipate an inquiry which will necessarily be brought forward in the ensuing session of Parliament. We will merely remark that no explanations on the subject, which he either cites from a letter of the 7th of November, 1822, or brings forward for the first time in his letter of the 3rd of February 1829, can form a justification of, what alone we have censured, the silence he maintained upon the subject in the year 1815, when the completion of the first registration of slaves, under the new Act, discovered to him that a population which, on the 8th of January 1811, he had stated to consist of only 60,000, namely, 39,415 males and 20,585 females, and which, on the 28th of July 1812, he further stated to be yearly diminishing at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, was found to have grown, during the intervening period, to the enormous amount of 87,352, viz. 56,684 males and 30,668 females.*

One word more. Sir Robert Farquhar states it to be untrue that the Mauritius law of slavery, as contained in the French Ordinances of 1723 and 1767, "arm the master with such absolute power over the slave," as we have represented. We have given a faithful abstract of them in the Reporter, No. 42, p. 332—334, and we must leave our readers to judge between us. There is no disputing about tastes, but we should have thought, with all due deference to the superior discernment of Sir R. Farquhar, that we were not sinning violently against good taste when we characterized as "arming the master with absolute power over the slave, and affording to the slave no effectual protection against its abuse," a law which prescribes, among other things, that slaves can possess no property whatever; that they cannot be witnesses or suitors; that if they strike a master or his child they shall suffer death; that their first absence for a month shall be followed by their being branded and having their ears cut off, the second by being branded and having their hamstrings cut, and the third by death; and that, when deemed deserving of it, they may be put in chains and flogged by the masters, at their discretion, to the amount of thirty lashes; &c. &c. &c.

Such then is Sir Robert's defence of an administration, by which he boasts to have done as much for the cause of humanity "as the whole party (of abolitionists) put together, and even their great patriarch himself," (meaning, we suppose, Mr. Wilberforce); and this defence, he

* Sir R. Farquhar has addressed another letter to the Colonial Office, on the Report made by the Commissioners of Inquiry, on the slave trade of the Mauritius, which is scarcely less accusatory of their motives than the letter now before us of those of the Anti-Slavery Reporter.

has respect to the officers of police alone, and has nothing to do with the relation of master and slave. It cannot, therefore, invalidate, in the very slightest degree, our abused, and calumniated statement, that we had not discovered, in the records of Sir R. Farquhar's administration, a single trace of any one measure for restraining the oppressions of the master, or for protecting from those oppressions the person of the slave.

If there be any such measure, we say again, and again, let it be produced. It has not yet been produced; and the defence of Sir Robert Farquhar only strengthens our doubt of its existence.

But Sir Robert Farquhar has not only thus egregiously failed in proving the incorrectness of our statement, with respect to his legislative measures for the amelioration of the condition of the slaves; he has equally failed in shewing the incorrectness of the facts we adduced, in confirmation of the total inefficiency of the existing laws to protect the slaves from cruelty of the most revolting description.—Of all those facts he has selected for contradiction only three, the cases of Prevot, Cotry, and Madame Nayle. (See our No. 44, p. 390, and 391.)

With respect to the facts of Prevot's case, there is no difference between us that we can discover. Sir Robert does not deny the horrid cruelties of which Prevot had been guilty, and we had ourselves stated that this ruffian alone had met with the fate he merited.

With respect to Cotry, the Honourable Baronet does not controvert our statement of the revolting enormities which that man is said to have committed, though the account we gave of them is, we suppose, one of the *impure* statements which he so squeamishly reprehends.—(Let our readers turn to it!) But then the Baronet says, Cotry, who was to have been hanged for his crimes, hanged himself, and, so only, escaped the gallows. We, on the other hand, have said, on authority we believe to be good, that Cotry did not hang himself, though that was most certainly reported, but escaped from prison, and two years afterwards reappeared in the Mauritius. We do not ourselves, of course, vouch for the correctness of this statement. But is it not just possible, that Sir Robert may have been deceived by an untrue report of Cotry's suicide, circulated to cover his escape; and that, quitting the island in the following year, he may not have known of Cotry's subsequent reappearance? If, however, Cotry really did kill himself in prison, as the Baronet affirms, let the "*procès verbal*" connected with the act of suicide be produced, and that will at once place the matter beyond question.

And now for Madame Nayle; we do not understand that Sir Robert means to deny the unspeakable atrocities we have attributed to that wretched female, or the attentions stated, nevertheless, to have been lavished upon her, by many of the Colonists, as in the case of the Mosses of Bahama, while she lay in prison. He says something, however, of "a stretch of the law in her case," which *we* would have "clamoured against as an unpardonable excess if Madame Nayle had been black instead of white." We do not at all understand to what the Hon. Baronet here alludes. We will only say, that that man must have a mind very singularly constituted indeed, who, after having read the detail of Madame Nayle's crimes, could be moved to commiseration, for any thing she is

Fourth, "That therefore the interference of the Missionaries between the master and the slave is dangerous, and incompatible with the political state of society in this island, and recommend to the house to adopt the most positive and exemplary enactments to restrain them."

This extraordinary report was adopted by the House of Assembly, and it was resolved "that a copy of the report of the committee appointed to inquire into the establishment and proceedings of the Sectarians, and the examinations taken before them, be forwarded to the agent, with instructions to lay the same before his Majesty's Ministers, together with a copy of the 83rd, 84th, and 85th clauses of the slave law, disallowed in 1827; and that the said report, and examination and clauses be printed and distributed by the agent."

Let us now hear what the West-Indian Reporter, the organ of the West-Indian committee, says on this subject.

"It is scarcely necessary," he says, "to remind the public that the measure of appointing this committee was adopted *for the purpose* of producing evidence in support of the three clauses of the slave law of 1826, which occasioned its disallowance by Mr. Huskisson; and which being re-enacted in 1828, recently occasioned its rejection by Sir John Keane. This evidence is of course most important. If the Jamaica House of Assembly have resorted to any unfair means to procure that evidence, or if it be not sufficiently strong to support these clauses, then are they the most foolhardy set of men who ever sat on a bench of legislature; since they have directed copies of it to be transmitted to their agent, to be laid before the King in Council, and before His Majesty's Ministers, and to be distributed and circulated generally in this country. They have done this too with the perfect knowledge that there is a strong body of Dissenters in this country, who will make common cause with the Missionaries in Jamaica, and who will spare neither time, nor trouble, nor expense in investigating the truth of that evidence; and if it be liable to imputation, holding up its authors and suborners to the ridicule and detestation of the multitude, and the just vengeance of His Majesty's Ministers. They know too that there is another organized body of inveterate enemies, who damn with disbelief every document, of whatever nature, or of whatever testimony, that bears the semblance of defence of colonial justice, or a vindication of colonial policy. They knew that ere a word of that evidence was printed, the Anti-Slavery Society was prepared to deny its truth; and if they doubted, the last packet that sailed from England will have proved it to them when it came in the last number of the Anti-Slavery Reporter.* They must know it will be attacked in Parliament by the united body of saints, sectarians, and all whom the love of mob popularity, and political and commercial rivalry enlist under the banners of the anti-colonists. They cannot overlook the vantage ground which they would thereby have afforded to their keen-eyed antagonists, if it be liable even to a justifiable suspicion of subornation of perjury. It is the design of Mr. Brougham to annihilate, if he can, through Parliament, the legislatures of all the colonies; and they cannot but be conscious of the tremendous accession of influence he will have gained, if he can show by any means that one of these legislative assemblies has procured and sanctioned an act restrictive of religious liberty, by means of the disgraceful testimony of perjured witnesses. He, and other leaders of that party, the Lushingtons, the Denmans, and the Buxtons, are unscrupulous enough as to the means they use in producing excitement in the House of Commons against the West-Indians

* No. 46, p. 433. The obnoxious words are, "We shall, of course, have an opportunity of soon seeing the evidence which is to establish the immoral and destructive tendency of the labours of the Missionaries. In the mean time, it is plain from what has transpired of it in the columns of the Jamaica newspapers, that it bears the character of fabrication on its very front." Such is still our conviction, only strengthened by the subsequent suppression of this evidence with which we were at first so boldly menaced.

and to the statements they bring forward. No matter to them whether a charge be true or false; it is made; and they mind not the contradiction, or have ingenuity enough to avert its effect. By these arts they almost annually add to the number of the anti-colonists; but it is really *awful* to think how great that folly must be, which would put into Mr. Brougham's hands such a report. What could they suppose it would be in the power of even the staunchest adherents of West-Indian interests to urge in reply to Mr. Brougham, should the legislature of Jamaica have based their cause on such a rotten foundation? They must feel to have acted dishonourably here, is to have given themselves up, bound hand and foot, into the hands of a persevering and implacable enemy, who will follow up his advantage to the death." "We would put it to the common sense of the indifferent public, whether it is probable that the Jamaicans can have such a set of madmen at the head of their councils? And yet the Anti-Slavery Reporter has already, with his customary insolence, pronounced them guilty of this absurdity of crime, while common sense gives the lie to their calumnious accusation;" "but the characters of these revilers is now too low for them to have much fear of their libels having much effect." p. 18, 19.

This elaborate, and, to their own apprehension, triumphant argument of the West India Committee, or whoever else superintend the West Indian Reporter, by which they seem to have hoped to silence for ever the whole host of abolitionists, it will now be perceived, has not only failed of its intended effect, but has recoiled with double force on themselves. On former occasions, the arts have been exposed by which the colonists abroad have laboured too successfully to delude the people of Great Britain, by means of testimony prepared to suit some present purpose. We have seen how easily, by such means, obnoxious individuals may be overwhelmed, like Smith, or like Lecesne, with unfounded obloquy, and even crushed under masses of suborned and perjured evidence; how easily also, in times of excitement, crowds of affidavit-men may be raised to support any proposition however untrue; and how even insurrections may be got up or provoked, and, to give them a colour, innocent blood poured out like water, if the reforms so much dreaded may thereby be averted. We have seen all this; but we have never before seen so undisguised an effort as the present, for effecting, by means of their usual machinery, their favourite object of maligning the Christian missionary, and extinguishing the light of Christianity among the slaves. The plot, however, has been too clumsily framed not to betray its true character to every eye but that of the heated and prejudiced artists of the imposture; for it appears that the moment these examinations, which, in Jamaica, were expected to perform such miracles of conviction in this country, and which were deemed of so irresistible a character by the excited colonists, came to be viewed more calmly by their friends at home, the danger of giving them publicity was at once seen; and though the force of this evidence had been so much vaunted in anticipation, even by the West Indian Reporter, yet it has been unsparingly stifled, and seems now doomed, if possible, to utter oblivion. Not a copy of it, we believe, has been suffered to escape; and all that is known of it is from the scanty notices of the Jamaica journals.

But how came the West Indian Reporter to have disturbed this prudent silence? Whence the strange folly of *publishing*, as well as printing its misplaced eulogy on evidence, only partially known, and which it has been now found necessary to suppress? It will be for its conductors to explain this. We suspect, but we do not vouch for the correct-

ness of the suspicion, that the editors deceived by the strong representations of their angry and over-zealous friends abroad, and, to use their own phrase, not believing it possible "that the Jamaicans could have such a set of madmen at the head of their councils" as it now appears they have; proceeded in that belief to frame the 16th number of their Reporter, before they had yet received and weighed the examinations from which so much was expected; but that when, having seen and weighed them, they discovered their error, and how egregiously they had been misled, it was then probably too late to prevent all the effects of their hasty confidence, as many copies of the work had prematurely been permitted to circulate. They could not have expected so sad a reverse as has since taken place; and, admiring the energy of their own production, were naturally eager to give it effect, by circulating it even before they had seen the whole of the evidence. At present, we doubt not, they regret their precipitancy, as the subsequent suppression of the evidence only converts their argument into a confirmation of our view of the nature and tendency of the whole of this abortive contrivance for vindicating the cruel and persecuting clauses of the act of 1826, and expelling the missionaries from Jamaica.

2. *Condition of the Slaves in the West Indies.*

Number XVIII of the West India Reporter, containing twelve closely printed pages, is occupied with a feeble attempt to prove that the *present* condition of the negroes in the West Indies is a state of unexampled enjoyment. It commences with a reference to the testimony "of impartial witnesses, the governors, naval and military officers, visitors," &c. the same parties who, in 1790, proved, with equal clearness, the innate humanity and loveliness of the African slave trade. This is followed by an anonymous letter from Jamaica, (dated July 30, 1795!!) which demonstrates that the slaves "*are in a far better situation than the labourers at home.*" This letter we leave to be refuted by the pamphlet of Mr. Dwaris and the speeches of Lord Seaford, the burden of whose song is, in concert with the great body of West Indian writers of the present day and with Mr. Barclay among the rest, that all the improvements which now render the state of the colonial slave the just envy of the British peasant, are the growth of the last twenty years.—The next witnesses produced are more modern, but they are also anonymous, and cannot weigh one feather's weight in this controversy, viz. an obscure periodical work called "*The Spectator*,"* and a publication entitled "*Sketches and Recollections of the West Indies.*" And this array is brought up by the discredited and exploded work of Mr. Barclay, respecting which we have only to reiterate our oft repeated and as often declined challenge to the West India Committee, (see No. 44, p. 396.) "to point out any one of the propositions advanced in Mr. Stephen's *Delineation of the Law of West India Slavery* as it existed in 1823, when he penned his invaluable production," which has been refuted, or

* Credit is claimed for this work on the ground of its avowed impartiality. And yet, when a paper was transmitted to its Editor, disproving every assertion it had made in favour of West Indian slavery, the paper was rejected. Such is its impartiality!

in any degree irritated by Mr. Barclay. That challenge being still declined, we leave this fresh attempt of those who bolster up their desperate cause by again producing Mr. Barclay as their champion to its fate. In the mean time we again refer those who desire information on the subject, to Nos. 18, 19, 37, and 40 of the Anti-Slavery Reporter.

3. *Consolidated Slave Law.*

A great part of the West India Reporter, No. 19, is occupied by a discussion of the Consolidated Slave Law of 1825, many of the most salutary clauses of which are attacked with no small degree of zeal and perverted ingenuity. We leave its defence to its parliamentary framer, Dr. Lushington, whenever it shall be deemed expedient to propose its alteration. In the mean time we rejoice that Sir George Murray has added to his other claims on public gratitude, that of having permitted the clauses of this act, which gave to His Majesty's Government the power of licensing the removal of slaves from one colony to another, to expire, as they did at the close of the last Session. The door is thus shut against the recurrence of those abuses, to which the continuance of such a power might have given birth.

4. *The West India Committee and its Mercenaries.*

An article bearing this title, which appeared in our No. 45, p. 427, has excited the ire of the West Indian Reporter. He does not deny our general statements, but only retorts them.—If the West India Committee has its pro-slavery rent levied on all colonial imports,* the Anti-Slavery Committee has also its contributions from all parts of the kingdom. If the advocates of the colonial cause are largely remunerated by the West India Committee, so, the writers of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, and the authors of the Anti-Slavery articles which appear in the Edinburgh Review, are remunerated from the funds of the Anti-Slavery Society. And as we called upon the West India Committee for a detail of their expenditure, so does he call on the Anti-Slavery Committee for a similar disclosure. This last request, we beg to inform him, has been complied with; a full and explicit statement of all the Anti-Slavery Society's receipts and payments has been regularly printed and extensively circulated, and is open to his inspection. And although we never intended to affirm or even to insinuate that the mere circumstance of receiving a fair remuneration for work done, is at all discreditable, either to those who pay or to those who receive it, yet it is due to truth that we should state, most distinctly and unequivocally, that no writer, either in the Anti-Slavery Reporter, or on colonial subjects in the Edinburgh Review, has ever received, directly

* The West Indian Reporter affects to deny the extent of the sum thus raised, and which we had conjectured might amount to £20,000. He can easily set us right in this respect. Our conjecture rests on a circular, signed Alexander Macdonnell, Secretary, and dated West India Dock House, 15th July, 1825, announcing an impost of sixpence on every cask of sugar, coffee, or rum, brought to this country, and on other articles in like proportion. Now, at this rate, the three articles which are particularly specified, viz. sugar, coffee, and rum, ought to yield, on the whole amount of their annual import into Great Britain and Ireland, at least £12,500. What may be the amount of all the other articles of import cannot be calculated with any thing like the same approximation to accuracy; but it must be very considerable.

or indirectly, from the Anti-Slavery Committee, or from any other person in their behalf, a single sixpence for any thing which has ever appeared in either of these works. This we assert solemnly, deliberately, and most confidently, without the slightest qualification or reservation whatsoever; and we include in this formal, and absolute, and sweeping denial, all that is said of “*hired orators*,” and “*mercenary authorlings*,” and “*offers of remuneration to authors if they will write against the West India colonies*.”

5. Challenge of the Anti-Slavery Reporter.

In our two last numbers, in commenting on the language of crimination employed respecting us by the British Critic, (No. 48, p. 488.) and by Mr. Irving in the House of Commons, (No. 49, p. 11.) we use words to this effect. “We totally deny the truth of their criminations, and we boldly challenge them to the proof. We call upon them to specify the particular statements on which they rest their charges—the particular and specific instances, either of a charge which we have made and not substantiated, or of an existing abuse which we have exaggerated; and if they refuse to do so, will not their harsh epithets recoil upon themselves?” “We accept this challenge,” gallantly replies the West India Reporter. But how does he accept it? “We accept the challenge,” he says, “observing, that *we do not feel ourselves bound to point out ONE DIRECT CALUMNY distinctly asserted*.” In other words, we accept the challenge, but wholly decline its terms. But they add, “we could shew page after page in which the libel is conveyed to the mind through the medium of the hint, the sneer, the base insinuation, which wound more frequently and penetrate more deeply than perhaps the most violent direct charge.” And then he produces, as his illustration, our comments on the case of the Mosses, and of the returns from the Fiscal of Berbice, (see No. 47, p. 468,) which comments, we maintain, convey neither hint, nor sneer, nor base insinuation, but the direct affirmation of our firm belief, that the occurrences brought to light, in colonies where we have had access to authentic returns, exemplify what may be reasonably apprehended to have occurred, in colonies similarly circumstanced. governed by similar laws, and marked by similar manners. habits. and feelings, but from which we have had *no* returns, either because *no* records are kept, or because, if they are kept, they are withheld from us. Besides, can any one have forgotten the presumptions furnished to this effect by the mock trials and massacres of Barbadoes in 1816. and of Demerara and Jamaica in 1824? But, says the West India Reporter, these things are the exception, not the rule, and to ground on them a sweeping censure is a libel which has been over and over again refuted by unexceptionable testimony. Our charge, however, is against the system, which we are no more afraid of being found to libel than we should have feared to be deemed guilty of libelling the slave trade in 1789, by describing it as a system of cruelty and blood, though Governors, and Generals, and Admirals, and planters, and merchants concurred in extolling its beauty and humanity, and though we were charged on their testimony, then as now, with indignantly substituting the exception for the rule. We deny the charge. The particular instances we at any time cite are merely illus-

trative and corroborative of the innate and incurable iniquity of any system which subsists by making man the slave and chattel of his fellow man.

So much for the five contemporaneous numbers of the West India Reporter.

III.—THE COMPULSORY MANUMISSION CLAUSE.

A PAPER printed by the House of Commons, June 2, 1829, and numbered 301, contains the "Copy of an Order in Council respecting the Manumission of Slaves in Demerara and Berbice, which has been issued since the examination of evidence upon that subject before the Privy Council." After reciting the substance of the petitions presented to the Privy Council, their Lordships state, that having considered those petitions, and heard evidence upon them, they did, on the 18th March, 1829,

"Agree humbly to Report, as their opinion, to your Majesty, that no sufficient cause hath been shewn why your Majesty should rescind so much of the Berbice Ordinance, as enables the slaves within the said colony to effect the purchase of their freedom upon an appraisement, in cases where the owners of any such slaves may not be consenting, or, by reason of some legal disability, may be unable to give any valid consent to such purchase; and they have further agreed humbly to report as their opinion, to your Majesty, that it may be expedient that your Majesty in your Privy Council, should issue an Order, confirming and giving effect to the said Ordinance, with such modifications, with a view to the more effectual execution thereof, as may appear advisable; regard being had to the laws of the said colony, which laws your Majesty has been graciously pleased to preserve and maintain. And his Majesty having taken the said Report into consideration, was pleased, by, and with the advice of his Privy Council, to approve thereof."

We are most anxious to know the result of this important decision. The clause on manumission, as it now stands in the Berbice Order, is so framed as to defeat, instead of accomplishing its own professed object, and the intentions of his Majesty. An account of its many defects may be found in our 28th Number, p. 93, and thither we refer those whom it concerns. We sincerely trust that those defects will now be remedied, as otherwise the order will be unavailing to any very beneficial purpose.

IV.—NATIVES OF SOUTH AFRICA.

ANOTHER gratifying proof of the effective liberality and just and enlightened views of his Majesty's Government is afforded us by another document, laid before Parliament on the 12th June, 1829, numbered 339, being "an Ordinance for improving the condition of the Hottentots, and other free persons of colour, at the Cape of Good Hope, and for consolidating and amending the laws affecting these persons."

The provisions of this Ordinance, which first emanated from the local Government at the Cape, on the 17th July, 1828, appear to be excellently adapted to their professed object of effectually securing the rights and liberties of the native Africans, and other free persons of colour, from the dreadful oppressions and spoliations to which they have so long been subjected. In giving to those provisions the Royal sanction, which was done on the 15th January, 1829, the following clear, unambiguous, and decisive terms are employed.

“His Majesty is graciously pleased, by and with the advice and consent of His Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, That the said Ordinance shall be, and is hereby ratified, confirmed and allowed, and finally enacted: And for the prevention of any doubt which might arise upon the construction of the said Ordinance, His Majesty is further pleased, with the advice aforesaid, to declare and it is hereby ordered and declared, That all Hottentots and other free persons of colour, lawfully residing within the said Colony, are and shall be, in the most full and ample manner, entitled to all and every the rights, privileges and benefits of the law, to which any other His Majesty's subjects, lawfully residing within the said Colony, are or can be entitled: Provided always, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to abrogate or annul the provisions made by the said Ordinance, for the good government of such Hottentots or other such free persons of colour, or any of those provisions: And it is hereby further ordered, That it shall not be lawful for any person within the said Colony, to whom any Hottentot or free person of colour hath been apprenticed, or to whom any such Hottentot or free person of colour hath entered into any contract of service, to detain or take in execution the person of any such Hottentot, or of any such free person of colour, for or by reason of any debt due and owing, or alleged to be due and owing to any such master or employer, by any such Hottentot or free person of colour: And it is hereby further ordered, That this present Order and the Ordinance hereby confirmed, shall not in anywise be altered, repealed or amended, by any law or ordinance to be hereafter made by the Governor or the Officer administering the government of the said colony, with the advice of the Legislative Council thereof, unless such Ordinance shall have been first expressly ratified, confirmed and allowed by His Majesty, with the advice of his Privy Council; and that every such Ordinance or pretended Ordinance, until so ratified, confirmed and allowed, shall be void and of no effect, and shall not be enforced or carried into execution by any of His Majesty's Courts, Judges, Justices, Officers and others, within the said Colony.”

V.—FREE BLACKS AND PEOPLE OF COLOUR.

WE noticed in our last number the spirit of justice and liberality which characterized the order, issued by the King in Council, relative to his Majesty's subjects of free condition, but of African descent, in Trinidad. A similar Order has been issued for the island of St. Lucia. It is to the following effect:

“Whereas his Majesty, taking into his gracious consideration the loyalty and good conduct of persons of free condition of African birth and descent, inhabiting the island of St. Lucia, and having considered the restrictions under which they laboured, by virtue of laws passed previous to the cession of the island, has been pleased, by his Order in Council, issued at the court at Windsor on the 15th of January last, to order that all laws, edicts, and ordinances having the force and effect of law at any time heretofore made or promulgated within the island, whereby free persons of African birth or descent were subjected to any disabilities or restrictions to which other free persons inhabiting the said island were not subject, should be, and the same were, thereby repealed, and for ever annulled and cancelled.

“The Governor doth hereby announce and promulgate such his Majesty's gracious pleasure; and therefore all such laws, and all such edicts and ordinances whatever, are declared to have been by the said Order in Council repealed, and for ever annulled and cancelled.

“The Governor is assured that the parties in whose favour this Order has been issued, will show by their future conduct, and by their readiness and zeal in coming forward, without distinction of class, for the maintenance of order, as they have hitherto done, that they entertain a due sense of the King's gracious regard for them.

“Given at the Government House, Castries, 6th of April, 1829.”

We cordially rejoice in the progressive extension of such just and

beneficent principles, principles which are every way worthy of British statesmen, and more truly honourable to them than the laurels that shade their brows; and which, afford to suffering humanity a dawning hope of brighter and better days. And it is most cheering also to perceive that the operation of these principles is not confined to the British empire. We have been assured by Mr. Rocafulerte, the Mexican ambassador, that in the great and populous province which he represents, those illiberal distinctions of colour, which the fastidiousness of Castilian pride had created and so long cherished in that soil, have nearly vanished; and this, not only as they respect civil and political rights, but as they respect the feelings, associations, and habits of social and domestic life; rank, property, talents, and education, unaffected by mere colour, forming the grand passports to eminence and respect. Nothing could prove this more clearly than the recent elevation of Guerrero, by the free suffrages of his countrymen, to the first office in the state, although he is the son of a negress by a mulatto, or what in our West-India colonies is known by the name of a Sambo.

VI.—CULTURE OF SUGAR BY FREE LABOUR.

IN a former number of our work, No. 37, p. 251, we quoted the authority of Mr. Ward, our envoy to Mexico, in proof of the possibility of profitably cultivating sugar, even in gangs, by free labour. This important fact is now officially notified to us by the production, on the table of Parliament, of a despatch from Mr. Ward, addressed to Mr. Canning from Mexico, on the 13th of March, 1826. We should have inserted this document at length had we had room. We must at present postpone it.

VII.—FRENCH SLAVE TRADE.

WE extract the following passage from the last number (that for June, 1829,) of the *Journal of the Society de la morale Chretienne*, at Paris.

"A letter from Martinique, of the 9th of February, informs us that seven slave ships have landed their cargoes in that colony. The first on the 4th of November, 1828, in the parish of François, contained 385 slaves, who were publicly sold on the plantation Hardy; the second, on the 12th of November, 500 slaves, in the parish of the Trinity, on the plantation Beausejour; the third, (a brig called *l'Entrepreneur*,) on the 24th of November, 1828, 212 slaves, in the parish of François, on the plantation Blamprés; the fourth on the 4th of December, having 130 slaves, in the same parish, on the plantation Hardy; the fifth, 200 slaves, on the 10th of December, on the plantation *Moulin-a-vent*, in the same parish; the sixth on the 13th of December, 180 slaves, on the plantation *La Pointe*; and the seventh on the 5th of January, 1829, on the plantation Hardy, by the schooner *la Folie*, 114 slaves. It appears that these slave ships belonged to Martinique, and had taken out their clearances for the island of St. Thomas, (on the coast of Africa). Twenty-five or thirty of the wretched slaves were ill, and have died since their arrival, and the pains were not taken even to bury them."

Thus do the French observe their solemn treaties on this subject!

